

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), Congressman John Hall (D-NY), and Congresswoman Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) today announced that they recently secured final congressional approval of \$700,000 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a comprehensive study to identify ways to prevent future flooding of the Upper Delaware River Watershed. Of the \$700,000 appropriation, up to \$300,000 will be used to address the severe flooding problem along Little Beaverkill Creek, especially in the hamlet of Livingston Manor in the Town of Rockland. The funds are part of the Omnibus Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2008, which the House approved yesterday.

Hall said, "Repeated and devastating flooding over the last several years has made it clear that serious flood control is a high priority in the Upper Delaware watershed. This study is the first step toward determining the best ways to protect communities in Orange and Sullivan counties from destructive floods."

"Based on the increased frequency and intensity of severe storms in the past few years, it is more imperative than ever that we work to mitigate future flooding throughout the Upper Delaware River Watershed in order to prevent it from threatening and destroying both properties and lives," Hinchey said. "These funds, which have received all of the congressional approval they need, will allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to examine the watershed comprehensively and then make final a determination of what can be done to help limit the risk of future flooding. It is time for residents to feel and be protected as much as humanly possible from any severe flooding in the future."

Gillibrand, a member of the House Armed Services Committee said, "It is my hope that this critical funding will help in preventing the devastation and destruction that we have all witnessed in the past few years. Through updated flood mapping and identification of important flood mitigation projects we can protect the families and businesses throughout the Delaware River Valley."

The Philadelphia District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study will be conducted in conjunction with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) and/or other local and state agencies, which will provide local matching funds. The flood mitigation study will consist of an investigation of the Upper Delaware River Watershed to identify opportunities for flood damage reduction and environmental restoration that could minimize the impacts of future flooding and prevent further losses of life and property. Specific high-priority areas along the Little Beaverkill Creek, such as the hamlet of Livingston Manor in the Town of Rockland, will get special attention from the Army Corps to address chronic and repetitive flood devastation from major flood events over the past several years, which in some cases have caused the loss of life. These major floods caused severe and repeated damage to thousands of structures and disrupted the lives of tens of thousands of people. The flooding was the worst since the record flood of 1955.

This study will expand upon the Army Corps Reconnaissance Study that was completed for the Upper Delaware River, which addressed the multiple purposes of flood damage reduction, ecosystem restoration, water quality control, comprehensive watershed management and other allied purposes. It will also allow the Army Corps to potentially address other water resource

needs and develop potential projects in cooperation with prospective non-federal sponsors.

The Senate approved the funds on Tuesday night, followed by a final House vote last night, and the president is expected to sign the measure into law in the coming days.

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